

Hurricane Ivan

Two days after the final public meeting on the Navarre Town Center Plan, Hurricane Ivan roared through northwest Florida and southwest Alabama. The damage that occurred in the early morning hours of September 17, 2004 will be evident in the Navarre community for years to come. Coastal areas of the region, including Navarre and Navarre Beach, were devastated. Storm surge and flooding destroyed homes and buildings, obliterated natural habitat and eroded shorelines.

As a result of the storm and the ongoing recovery effort, the original date for BOCC consideration of the Plan was postponed more than a month from September 22 to October 28. Even five weeks after the storm, life in Navarre is not back to anywhere near normal. County leaders and staff determined that it was important to go ahead with consideration within a short time frame in order to honor the effort of the community in this process and to begin the mental emergence of normalcy for the community.

Hurricane Ivan affected the Town Center Plan in more ways than delaying its adoption. County and community resources will be diverted to recovery for many months, and in some ways, for years. This will certainly impact the ability of the County and the community to implement the plan as originally intended. However, very ironically, some of the recommendations of this plan will be more easily implemented as the rebuilding process occurs.

The Navarre community is strong, and its people are resolved to rebuild an even better place to live. Santa Rosa County will work to ensure that the Navarre Town Center Plan plays a positive role in the community rebuilding effort.